

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 305629
ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 R

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TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 305629

EXDIS FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT BONN 21170 SENT ACTION SECSTATE, USBERLIN,
BERLIN, LONDON, PARIS, MOSCOW, USNATO, CINCEUR, USNMR SHAPE
22 DEC 77

QUOTE S E C R E T BONN 21170

EXDIS

MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PGOV, MILI, BQG, AKG

SUBJECT: RUMORS OF GDR RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS TO EAST BERLIN

REFS: (A) USBER 3209 (NOTAL); (B) BONN 21091 (NOTAL);
(C) BERLIN 9234 (NOTAL); (D) USBER 3174 (NOTAL);
(E) BERLIN 8439 (NOTAL)

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE BONN GROUP MET THIS MORNING
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TO CONSIDER SUBJECT.

WHILE IT WAS AGREED THAT THE LIKELIHOOD OF GDR ACTION
TO RESTRICT ACCESS BY FLAG TOURS OR OTHER OFFICIAL
ALLIED PERSONNEL IS SLIGHT, IT WAS AGREED (AT US
INSISTENCE) THAT WE SHOULD DO SOME PRELIMINARY THINKING
ABOUT THE CONTINGENCY IN VIEW OF ITS IMPORTANCE. IT
WAS AGREED TO RECOMMEND A PRELIMINARY LOW-KEY DEMARCHE
TO THE SOVIETS IN BERLIN AS A PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE
AND TO OUTLINE CERTAIN SUGGESTED STEPS WHICH THE ALLIES
MIGHT TAKE IN CASE OF A DENIAL OF ACCESS, EITHER TO
OFFICIAL ALLIED PERSONNEL OR TO NON-OFFICIAL PERSONNEL

(E.G. IN AN ATTEMPT TO RESTRICT ENTRY OF GUEST WORKERS)
AT FRIEDRICHSTRASSE. ACTION REQUESTED: DEPARTMENT'S
NOTIFICATION BY OPENING OF BUSINESS DECEMBER 23 OF ANY
OBJECTION
TO SUGGESTIONS FOR STEPS IN
PARAGRAPH 9 INFRA. END SUMMARY.

1. THE BONN GROUP MET THIS MORNING TO CONSIDER
WHETHER ALLIES SHOULD PLAN FOR CONTINGENCY OF
RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST BERLIN.
US REP REPORTED INFORMATION CONTAINED REFTELS (C)
AND (D) AND ASKED WHETHER OTHERS HAD SIMILAR
INFORMATION.
2. UK REP (EYERS) REPORTED THAT UK EMBASSY IN EAST
BERLIN HAD THE SAME REPORT FROM AN EGYPTIAN DIPLOMAT
AS THE US DID. TURNING TO THE LIKELIHOOD OF THE GDR
TAKING MEASURES TO RESTRICT ACCESS, HE SAID IT WAS
HIGHLY DOUBTFUL. WITH RESPECT TO ALLIED DIPLOMATS
IN EAST BERLIN, HE RECALLED THAT AT THE TIME THE
ALLIED EMBASSIES WERE ESTABLISHED THERE, THE THREE
GOVERNMENTS OBTAINED ASSURANCES THAT THE ALLIES WOULD
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HAVE FREE MOVEMENT. HE EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE
GDR WOULD MAINTAIN THIS PRINCIPLE FOR ALL DIPLOMATS,
NOT ONLY ALLIED ONES. WITH RESPECT TO ENTRY INTO
EAST BERLIN VIA FRIEDRICHSTRASSE, EYERS SAID THAT
THERE WERE TWO POSSIBILITIES: RESTRICTIONS ON NON-
OFFICIAL FOREIGNERS ONLY (E.G. THE GUEST WORKERS) AND
RESTRICTIONS ON OFFICIAL TRAVELERS, ESPECIALLY OF THE
ALLIES AND ALLIED FLAG TOURS.

3. EYERS SAID THAT IF THE RESTRICTIONS WERE APPLIED
ONLY TO NON-ALLIED FOREIGNERS, WE WOULD OF COURSE
DEPLORE THIS BUT, SO LONG AS THE ACCESS OF BERLINERS
(BERLINERS AND OTHER GERMANS DO NOT USE FRIEDRICH-
STRASSE) AND THE ALLIES WAS NOT AFFECTED, HE DOUBTED
THAT ANY OF THE ALLIED GOVERNMENTS WOULD BE PREPARED TO
DO MORE THAN ISSUE STATEMENTS DEPLORING THIS
RESTRICTION. IF ALLIED ACCESS WAS RESTRICTED, THAT
WOULD OF COURSE BE A MUCH MORE SERIOUS MATTER.

4. VON BRAUNMUEHL SAID THE ONLY RUMORS THE FRG HAD
HEARD RELATED TO DIPLOMATS IN EAST BERLIN. HE
CAUTIONED BY SAYING THAT WE MUST CONSIDER THREE
ELEMENTS: A) THE PRINCIPLE OF FREE MOVEMENT
THROUGHOUT BERLIN; B) WHETHER ANY RESTRICTIONS ON
ACCESS ARE PART OF A LONG-TERM GDR STRATEGY, IN WHICH
CASE THEY WOULD BE SERIOUS EVEN IF ALLIED ACCESS WERE
NOT AFFECTED; AND C) WHETHER SUCH A MOVE MIGHT BECOME
PUBLIC, IN WHICH CASE PUBLIC STATEMENTS SHOULD BE MADE

BY THE FRG AND ALLIES. HE AGREED WITH THE US REP THAT WE SHOULD GIVE PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATION TO ALLIED AND FRG REACTIONS IN THE EVENT OF FURTHER RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS.

5. EYERS SAID THAT WHILE HE DID NOT DENY THE POSSIBILITY THAT THERE MAY BE RESTRICTIONS ON ALLIED TRAFFIC, THE LONDON DECLARATION HAD MADE CLEAR THE SECRET

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IMPORTANCE THAT WE ATTACH TO FREE ALLIED ACCESS.

HE EXPRESSED THE OPINION THAT THE CURRENT BELGRADE CONFERENCE MADE IT LESS LIKELY THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD ALLOW RESTRICTIONS ON ALLIED ACCESS TO BE IMPOSED AT THIS TIME AND ASKED BRAUNMUEHL WHETHER THE PROJECTED BREZHNEV VISIT TO THE FRG MIGHT ALSO MAKE THE SOVIETS LESS INCLINED TO CAUSE TROUBLE OVER BERLIN. VON BRAUNMUEHL RESPONDED THAT, IN HIS VIEW, WE CANNOT ASSUME THAT BELGRADE MAKES SUCH A MOVE LESS RATHER THAN MORE LIKELY AND THAT THE LATEST INDICATIONS POINT TO A BREZHNEV VISIT IN MAY, FAR ENOUGH IN THE FUTURE TO DIMINISH THE EFFECT OF THIS FACTOR. HE NOTED THAT IN THE PAST THE GDR HAS USED THE YEAR END TO MAKE NEW MOVES TO IMPOSE ITS VERSION OF THE STATUS OF EAST BERLIN AND MIGHT BE PLANNING TO DO SO THIS YEAR. EYERS ANSWERED BY SAYING THAT THE UK HAS SEEN NO INDICATION, OTHER THAN RUMORS, THAT THEY PLAN TO DO SO. THERE HAD BEEN INDICATIONS OF SUCH INTENTIONS BEFORE THE SOVIET DEMARCHES ON FLAG TOURS EARLIER THIS YEAR.

6. THE FRENCH REP (GAUSSOT), WHO HAD APPARENTLY NOT RECEIVED REPORTS OF RUMORS OF NEW RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS, AGREED WITH EYERS THAT SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WAS UNLIKELY.

7. THE US REP AGREED THAT THE RESTRICTIONS WERE UNLIKELY AND THAT WE SHOULD NOT PUT TOO MUCH WEIGHT ON THE RUMORS HEARD THUS FAR. HOWEVER, THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MATTER SEEMED TO MAKE IT PRUDENT THAT WE DO SOME ADVANCE PLANNING AS TO WHAT THE ALLIES WOULD DO IN THE EVENT OF RESTRICTIONS. EYERS SAID THAT LONDON WOULD SECRET

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BE "FURIOUS" IF HE SENT DETAILED CONTINGENCY PLANS TO LONDON SO SHORTLY BEFORE CHRISTMAS. THESE RUMORS HAVE BEEN CIRCULATING FOR SEVERAL WEEKS; TO ATTACH IMPORTANCE TO THEM NOW IS SILLY. HOWEVER, HE AGREED THAT SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS WHICH THE US REP HAD

OUTLINED (SET OUT BELOW) WERE NOT UNREASONABLE. HE COMMENTED THAT ALL OF US HAVE PEOPLE IN BERLIN WHO ARE MORE INTIMATELY ACQUAINTED WITH THE MATTER AND WHO ARE PREPARED TO REACT TO ANY SOVIET OR GDR MOVES. HE SAID THAT THE ONLY TERMS IN WHICH THE SUGGESTIONS CAN REASONABLY BE PUT TO LONDON ARE THAT THIS IS A US SUGGESTION, WHICH SOUNDS REASONABLE TO THE UK EMBASSY HERE AND WHICH SEEMS CONSISTENT WITH OUR CONTINGENCY PLANNING. AS SUCH, THE IDEAS COULD BE DRAWN UPON BY THE MISSIONS IF NECESSARY. HOWEVER, HE SAID HE COULD NOT SEND ANYTHING TO LONDON FOR A DECISION.

8. AS A FIRST STEP, IT WAS AGREED THAT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL FOR THE ALLIES TO MAKE A LOW-KEY PREEMPTIVE DEMARCHE WITH THE SOVIETS IN BERLIN E.G., AT THE TIME THE REPLY ON THE REICHSBAHN TARIFFS IS DELIVERED. THIS WOULD PRESUMABLY BE DONE BY THE FRENCH SINCE THEY ARE IN THE CHAIR IN DECEMBER. IT WAS AGREED THAT A STATEMENT SOMEWHAT ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES WOULD BE APPROPRIATE:

"WE HAVE HEARD RUMORS THAT THERE MAY BE A CHANGE IN PROCEDURES AT THE FRIEDRICHSTRASSE CHECKPOINT WHICH WOULD AFFECT ACCESS TO EAST BERLIN. WE ASSUME THESE RUMORS ARE UNFOUNDED. AS YOU KNOW, THE IMPORTANCE WHICH OUR AUTHORITIES ATTACH TO FREE MOVEMENT THROUGHOUT BERLIN HAS BEEN MADE VERY CLEAR."

9. IT WAS ALSO AGREED THAT THE FOLLOWING WOULD BE APPROPRIATE STEPS IN CASE OF: A) CLOSURE TO UNOFFICIAL SECRET

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PERSONS ONLY; AND B) CLOSURE TO OFFICIAL ALLIED PERSONS (WITH OR WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE).

A) CLOSURE TO UNOFFICIAL PERSONS ONLY:

- 1) IMMEDIATE PROTEST IN BERLIN
- 2) PRESS STATEMENT
- 3) CONSIDERATION OF PROTEST IN CAPITALS

B) CLOSURE TO OFFICIAL ALLIED PERSONS:

- 1) SAME STEPS AS ABOVE
- 2) MEASURES ON THE GROUND
 - A) AS A PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE, ENSURE THAT THERE IS AN ALLIED (PROBABLY US) FLAG TOUR IN BERLIN BEFORE MIDNIGHT WITH A RETURN SCHEDULED AFTER MIDNIGHT. THIS WOULD ENSURE THAT ANY CLOSURE WOULD AFFECT THAT FLAG TOUR. THIS MIGHT BE DONE ON EACH OF SEVERAL DAYS ON AND

AROUND DECEMBER 31.

B) HAVE A FLAG TOUR PRESENT ITSELF FOR ENTRY SOMETIME AFTER MIDNIGHT, WHILE THE OTHER FLAG TOUR IS STILL IN EAST BERLIN.

C) IF ENTRY IS DENIED, HAVE FLAG TOUR REPORT BACK AND WAIT AT THE ENTRY POINT DURING WHICH TIME ATTEMPTS WOULD BE MADE TO HAVE A FLAG TOUR VEHICLE FROM ANOTHER OF THE ALLIES PREPARE TO PRESENT ITSELF AT THE ENTRY POINT. WHEN SUCH SECOND FLAG TOUR IS PREPARED TO ENTER, HAVE THE FIRST FLAG TOUR
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MAKE WAY FOR THE SECOND VEHICLE. DURING THIS TIME, ATTEMPTS COULD BE MADE IN BERLIN (AND PERHAPS ALSO IN CAPITALS) TO PROTEST TO THE SOVIETS AND TO SEEK TO HAVE THE RESTRICTIONS LIFTED.

D) SINCE THE PHOTOGRAPH AND DIAGRAM OF FRIEDRICHSTRASSE PROVIDED BY USBER APPEARS TO SHOW ONLY A POLE BARRIER, WHICH PERSONNEL ON FOOT COULD PASS, INITIATE A PROBE (PREFERABLY TRIPARTITE) BY SEVERAL UNIFORMED PERSONNEL ON FOOT TO DEMONSTRATE THE RIGHT OF ACCESS.

10. AN ADDED SUGGESTION, WHICH WE MENTIONED IN THE MEETING BUT WHICH IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE ABOVE BECAUSE IT SEEMED TOO DETAILED, IS THAT USCOB MIGHT CONSIDER ENSURING THAT ONE OR MORE OF THE PERSONNEL IN THE FLAG TOUR VEHICLE BE FLUENT IN GERMAN IN CASE THE GDR VOPOS GIVE AN EXPLANATION FOR THE RESTRICTIONS. WE EMPHASIZE THAT THESE ARE ONLY SUGGESTIONS; THE DECISIONS ON PRECISE STEPS WILL OF COURSE HAVE TO BE TAKEN IN BERLIN. HOWEVER, WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO OBTAIN PRELIMINARY CONCURRENCE BY THE FRENCH AND BRITISH OF THE TYPES OF MEASURES WHICH MIGHT SEEM APPROPRIATE. THE BRITISH PLAN TO REPORT BUT SEE NO NEED TO SEEK INSTRUCTIONS. THE FRENCH WILL REPORT TO PARIS WITH THE NOTATION THAT IF NO CONTRARY INSTRUCTION IS RECEIVED BY TOMORROW, THEY WILL ASSUME PARIS AGREES TO THE TYPES OF STEPS WHICH THE ALLIES MIGHT TAKE. FINALLY, IF THERE IS A RESTRICTION ON ACCESS AND IT BECOMES PUBLIC, THE FRG WILL MAKE A PUBLIC STATEMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT THEY ARE CONSULTING WITH THE ALLIES ON THIS MATTER.

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11. AS NOTED ABOVE, THE BONN GROUP ALSO DISCUSSED THE REPORT OF POSSIBLE NEW GDR RESTRICTIONS ON DIPLOMATS IN EAST BERLIN. THE FRG REP SAID THAT THEY HAD HEARD THE SAME RUMORS AS THE US AND UK. THEIR PERMANENT REPRESENTATION HAD DISCUSSED ENTRY AND EXIT PROCEDURES WITH THE GDR MFA ON NOVEMBER 8. THEY WERE TOLD BY THE MFA THAT GREEN CARDS (FOR NON-DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL) ARE NOT "SUFFICIENT FOR CROSSING FRONTIERS" BUT MUST BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH PASSPORTS, AS THEY REPORTEDLY HAVE BEEN IN THE PAST. HOWEVER, THERE WAS NO INDICATION (NOR DID THE FRG PERMANENT REPRESENTATION ASK THE QUESTION) THAT THERE WOULD BE ANY CHANGE IN THE USE OF RED CARDS, WHICH ARE USED BY DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL.

12. THE UK REP NOTED THAT THE UK AMBASSADOR IN EAST BERLIN TAKES A HARD LINE ON QUESTIONS SUCH AS ACCESS AND THAT HE COULD BE EXPECTED TO RESIST ANY ATTEMPTS TO CHANGE PRESENT PROCEDURES. THE US REP REORTED ALONG THE LINES OF REF C. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE BONN GROUP SHOULD DEFER TO THE EMBASSIES IN EAST BERLIN FOR INITIAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON THIS SUBJECT.

13. REF A AND USBER 3208 WERE RECEIVED AFTER BONN GROUP MEETING AND AFTER PREPARATION OF THIS MESSAGE. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THE MESSAGE TO THE SOVIETS SHOULD BE SOMEWHAT CLEARER THAN A GENERAL REFERENCE TO UNILATERAL CHANGES. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE SOVIETS ARE NOT AWARE OF GDR PLANS (AS THEY MAY NOT HAVE BEEN IN THE CASE OF THE CONTROL OF DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS AT FRIEDRICHSTRASSE). IN ANY CASE, OUR MESSAGE SHOULD NOT BE MISUNDERSTOOD.

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WE HAVE JUST BEEN INFORMED BY THE FRENCH THAT LASSUS OF THE FRENCH MISSION IN BERLIN IS INFORMING THE SOVIETS OF THE RESPONSE ON THE REICHSBAHN MATTER AT 4:00 P.M. TODAY, AT WHICH TIME HE WILL MAKE THE STATEMENT IN PARAGRAPH 8. USBER IS AWARE OF THIS AND HAVE INFORMED US THAT THEY CONCUR. WE WOULD APPRECIATE A PROMPT REPORT OF THE SOVIET REACTION TO THE DEMARCHE.

14. FOR BACKGROUND OF MILITARY ADDRESSEES, WHO DID NOT RECEIVE REFERENCED CABLES, THERE ARE UNCONFIRMED RUMORS IN BERLIN (BUT NO FIRM INDICATIONS) THAT THE GDR MAY INTENDS TO RESTRICT ACCESS TO EAST BERLIN VIA CHECKPOINT CHARLIE/FRIEDRICHSTRASSE BETWEEN THE HOURS OF MIDNIGHT

AND 6:00 A.M., BEGINNING DECEMBER 31. THERE IS ANOTHER
RUMOR THAT THE GDR MAY INSIST THAT DIPLOMATS
STATIONED IN EAST BERLIN PASS BETWEEN EAST BERLIN
AND WEST BERLIN USING PASSPORTS, NOT IDENTITY CARDS
ISSUED BY THE GDR MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OR BY THE
MILITARY GOVERNMENTS IN BERLIN.

15. ACTION REQUESTED: DEPARTMENT'S NOTIFICATION BY
OPENING OF BUSINESS DECEMBER 23 OF ANY OBJECTION

TO SUGGESTIONS FOR STEPS IN PARAGRAPH 9 SUPRA.
STOESSEL. UNQUOTE VANCE
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 22-Sep-1999 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BERLIN ACCESS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 23-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE305629
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: IO/UNA:BJSHARP
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 XGDS-3
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D770478-1038
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197712111/baaaaeutn.tel
Line Count: 341
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 83f65dfc-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 7
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 119830
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RUMORS OF GDR RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS TO EAST BERLIN
TAGS: PGOV, MILI, BQG, AKG
To: USUN N Y
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/83f65dfc-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009